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Design to assist boards of education, administrators, music teachers and architects in planning adequate facilities for a music department based upon the needs of individual districts. Location and scope of facilities are discussed as are specifications for architectural elementals of rehearsal and auxilliary rooms. Brief discussions on equipment standards are given. (FPO)

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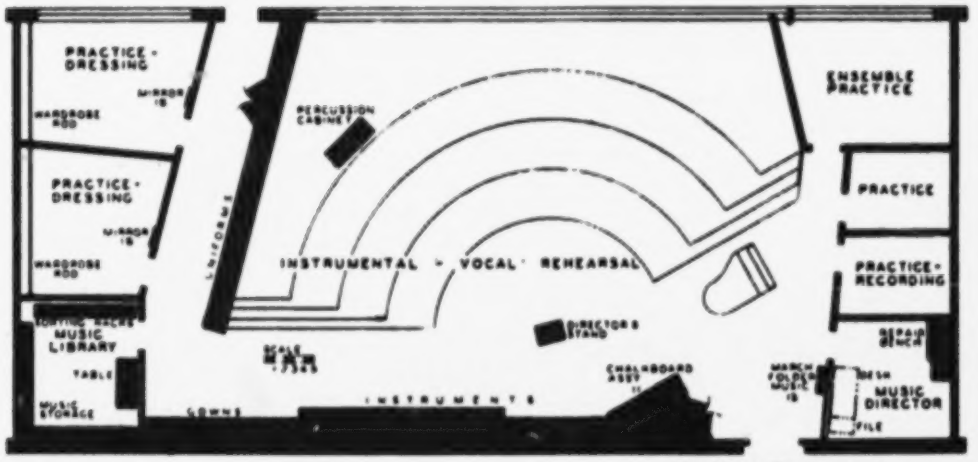
Frankfort, Kentucky

MUSIC facilities

new remodeling

FLOOR PLAN for A ONE-TEACHER MUSIC DEPARTMENT



Sheldon Equipment

INSTRUMENTAL
VOCAL COMBINATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

This writing on facility planning is provided as a service of the Division of Instructional Services, Bureau of Instruction, to assist the local school district in meeting its needs.

At the same time it is expected that these principles will assist the architect in incorporating the ideas coming from the district into a workable plan which will more adequately meet its needs in the development of an adequate but realistic music program.

Reference to commercial interests does not constitute an endorsement of the products sold by a particular company. Reference is made simply to indicate the availability of material which may be of interest and indicate to some extent what should be expected in the building of new facilities or remodeling old facilities.

In addition the reader will find it quite worthwhile to refer to such published texts as Sur and Schuller, Music Education for Teen-Agers, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1958., or others which may be available.

It is recommended that scope of music program and the number of students expected to be served be carefully considered in using the following material. The possibilities of further expansion are important in determing the scope and size of the facility.

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Division of Instructional Services
Reprinted October 1966

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Music Education

MUSIC FACILITIES

The purpose of this pamphlet is to assist boards of education, superintendents, principals, music teachers and architects plan adequate facilities for a music department as based upon the needs of the individual districts. While the information is particularly pertinent to the building of new facilities, it would be well to follow recommendations in remodeling in so far as is possible.

Location of Facilities

There is always a problem in regard to moving band instruments from storage to the location in which they will be used. The band will often participate in assemblies and programs which will generally be presented in the auditorium. It would then, when possible, be highly desirable that rehearsal and storage rooms be adjoining the auditorium. Good examples of this type of placement will be found at the Franklin County High School and the Bardstown Independent High School. Since this is a somewhat common pattern, other examples may be located.

It will be noted in both of the above examples that the music facilities are more or less built around the auditorium with the opposite walls being outside walls. Thus, there is less possibility of interference with other areas of the school program.

There have been cases in which additions to present facilities have been adjacent to shop facilities. Because of the noise involved in shop activity, this should be avoided. It is difficult to adequately sound condition when these two facilities are together.

It would of course be ideal if facilities could be connected to the auditorium and also be close to the football field. In some cases this has been possible. This arrangement makes it possible to immediately remove instruments to a sheltered position in the case of bad weather.

Scope of Facilities

It is not enough to provide a rehearsal room in that this procedure not only limited possibilities of program development but presents hazards due to the necessity of leaving valuable instruments lying around the rehearsal room and is likely to result in damage or loss of equipment and material. The life of instruments can be ten, twenty, or even more years when proper provisions are made for storage. Ample provisions for storage of course eliminate many unnecessary repair bills.

Two or more practice rooms, depending upon the number of students involved, are highly desirable for effective instruction. An office, or combination office-library is needed. Not only is it necessary for the teacher to have some kind of privacy, but there must be a place for records and consultation with students. Obviously, there must be a place to file and record the music necessary, generally for the twelve grades. A greater amount of filing space than might be expected is needed in view of the fact that a considerable amount of material may not be used a second time for two or more years.

Rehearsal Rooms

One rehearsal room may suffice for both instrumental and vocal music when involving a single teacher, but in large units which employ

two or more teachers there should be, of course, both an instrumental room and a vocal room. Ordinarily, the vocal room will not need to be as large as the instrumental room since any room will accomodate approximately twice as many vocal students as instrumental students in performing groups.

There are many reasons why a room which is approximately one-fourth wider than it is deep is preferable. Rooms which are wider than the above make it difficult for the conductor to maintain eye contact with the students at his extreme right or left. Rooms which are square or nearly so make it difficult to properly install risers or elevations. It will also be difficult to seat students in sections and most of the sound will be coming directly toward the conductor.

The Sheldon Company[1] indicates that a floor space of 3,760 square feet will accomodate seventy-five instrumental students, which, of course, includes the auxiliary rooms shown in the plan. This is perhaps generous, but an instrumental player will necessarily require a space about four feet square in playing position. Some educators have indicated seventeen square feet as being necessary. An idea of the necessary space for any given facility may be obtained by noting specifications for risers and considering the number of students which the rehearsal room is expected to accomodate.

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1. Sheldon Equipment Company, Muskegon, Michigan. See Music Education Bulletin, State Department of Education, August, 1966, pp. 64,65,66.

Anticipated expansion should be considered if this is a possibility. However, a band of a hundred or a hundred and twenty-five students is likely to be the largest group to be considered. At about these figures, it becomes desirable to schedule a feeder or B band. Learning becomes more difficult as bands are increased to over sixty or seventy players depending somewhat upon the teacher.

If there is to be a vocal room it should be close to the instrumental facilities, but not necessarily immediately next to the rehearsal room. There will be times when either the instrumental teacher or the vocal teacher may need to divide a group temporarily and practice rooms will be too small.

Risers are often provided for the vocal rehearsal room, but some vocal teachers appear to prefer risers which are shaped on a larger radius since the distance from the conductor to performers at his extreme right or left will be much less in view of the fact that vocal students may be seated much closer together. It would be well to consult the vocal teacher in regard to this matter.

Risers

Practically without exception all new facilities now include risers. They are built in and become a part of the rehearsal room. Since this involves multiple levels, care should be taken to place risers so that there can be a ground or building level entrance. The lower level will generally be facing the entrance.

As a matter of conserving space, auxiliary rooms (practice, library, office, storage) may be placed in front of the risers so they will be on

floor level. If these rooms are placed at the side of the risers, as is the case in many instances, a passage space must be left between the risers and the rooms to keep them on the same level. When rooms are on the side of the risers, allowance must be made for the fact that pianos may need to be moved in and out.

Dimensions

It is obvious that there will be a great deal of variance in planning for the installation of risers because of a variance in expected enrollment. However, certain principles will be of definite help. Risers should be a minimum of 42" deep and preferable 48" to allow for the placement of a music stand and avoid interference with other players. The last (upper) elevation, at least at the back, should be 60" deep to accommodate percussion and the larger wind instruments which will be placed in this area.

The elevation of each riser should be about eight inches. Thus the elevations in a three elevation unit will be 8", 16", and 24". Three elevations are expected to be a minimum. Additional elevations may be added when large groups are to be accommodated.

Shape

The shape or contour of risers will necessarily vary to some degree partly because of a variance in room size and in some cases because of preference of the vocal teacher.

The instrumental teacher does often have preferences but the main consideration should be that the instrumental performers be able to see the conductor when they are in playing position and that the director can maintain "eye contact" with his players a great deal of

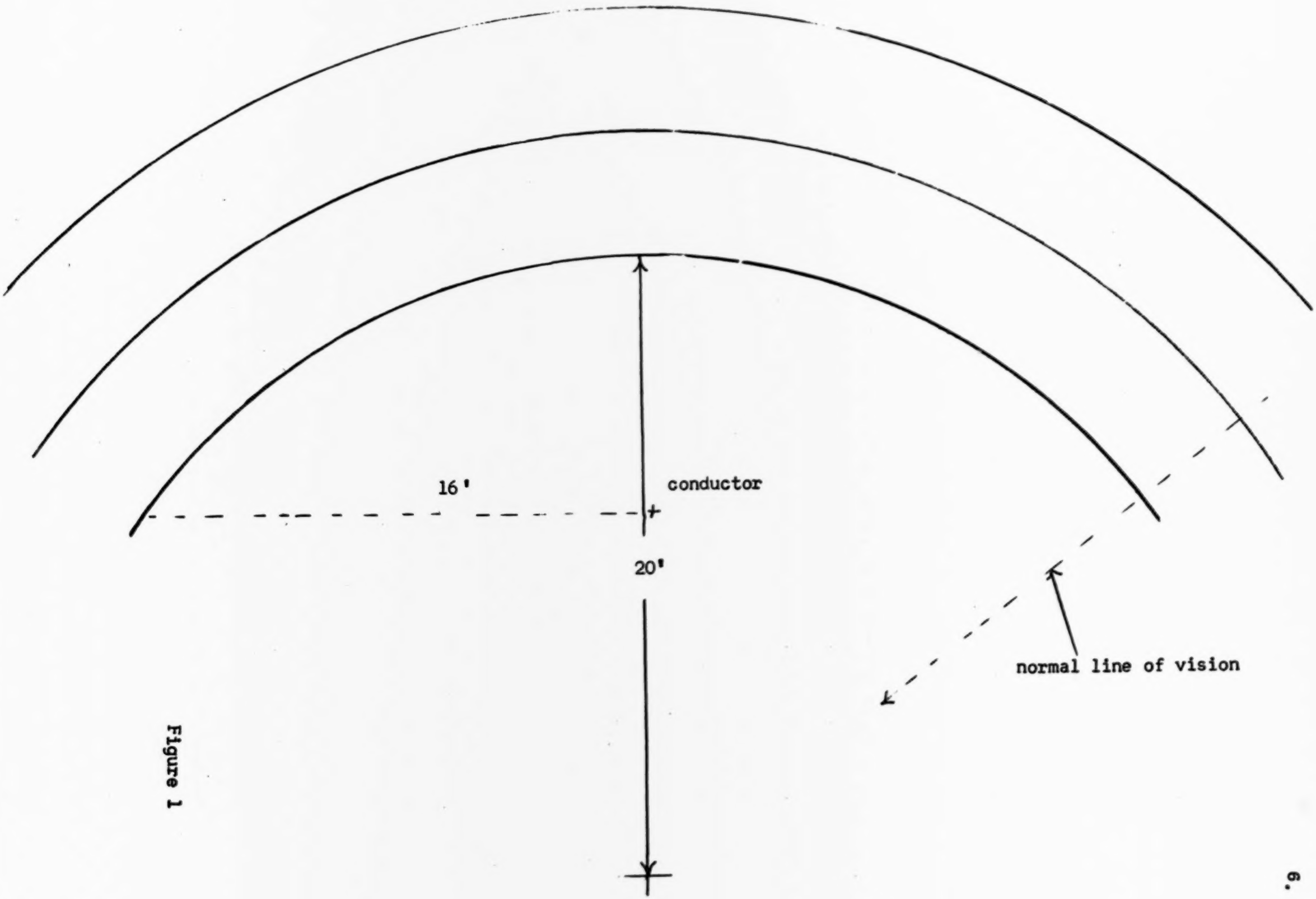

Figure 1

the time. The difference in possibilities in vocal and instrumental groups lies in the fact that the instrumental of necessity will play looking almost directly forward. The vocalist can turn his head toward the director.

Another problem results from the fact that instrumentalists require more room. When risers are made on a large circle radius (figure 1) the player is not only facing away from the conductor but is a great distance from him.[2]

When a large circle is used, the practice has been to use only a segment. Obviously using half a circle would waste a great deal of space within the group. In one instance already mentioned the contour comes from an even larger circle which as was pointed out makes it impossible for many students to face the director. Figure 1 might be used as a basis for risers in a small vocal room, but would not be satisfactory for the instrumental rehearsal room.

Ordinarily a half circle (or extended half circle) with a radius of eight feet is a good starting point (figure 2). Some directors may prefer a slightly larger radius in order that more players may be seated comfortably on the floor level without interference.

The risers illustrated in figure 2 involve four elevations. If there is space left as indicated by "X", this would be on the top elevation and will provide extra space for percussion and the brass section. There might be room for storage or racks for basses.

While some risers are constructed in a true circular manner, the costs of course are greater. The plan can be resolved into a series of sections

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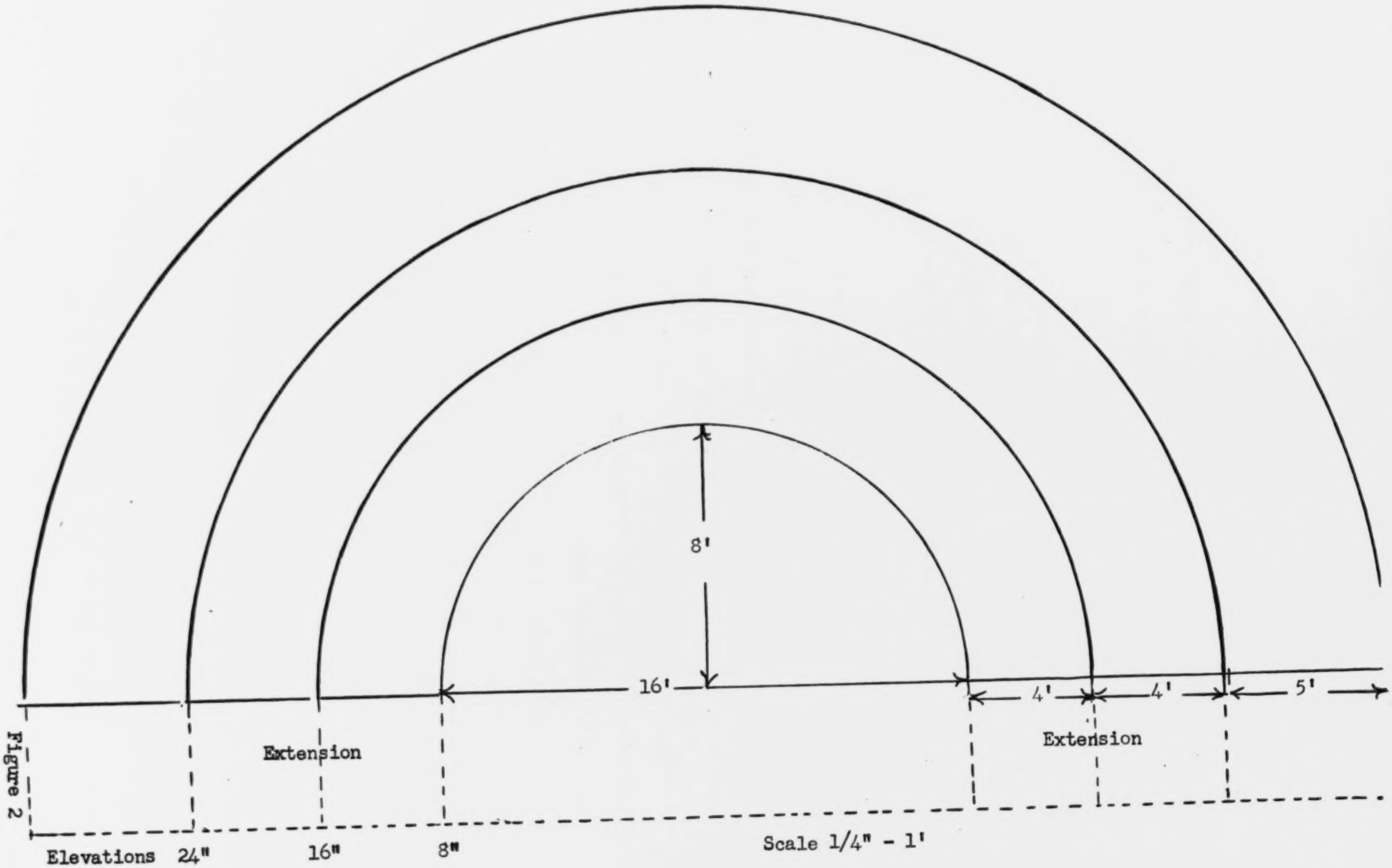
2. Franklin County High School, Frankfort, Kentucky


8'
16'
4'
4'
5'
Extension
Extension
Figure 2
Elevations 24" 16" 8"
Scale 1/4" - 1'

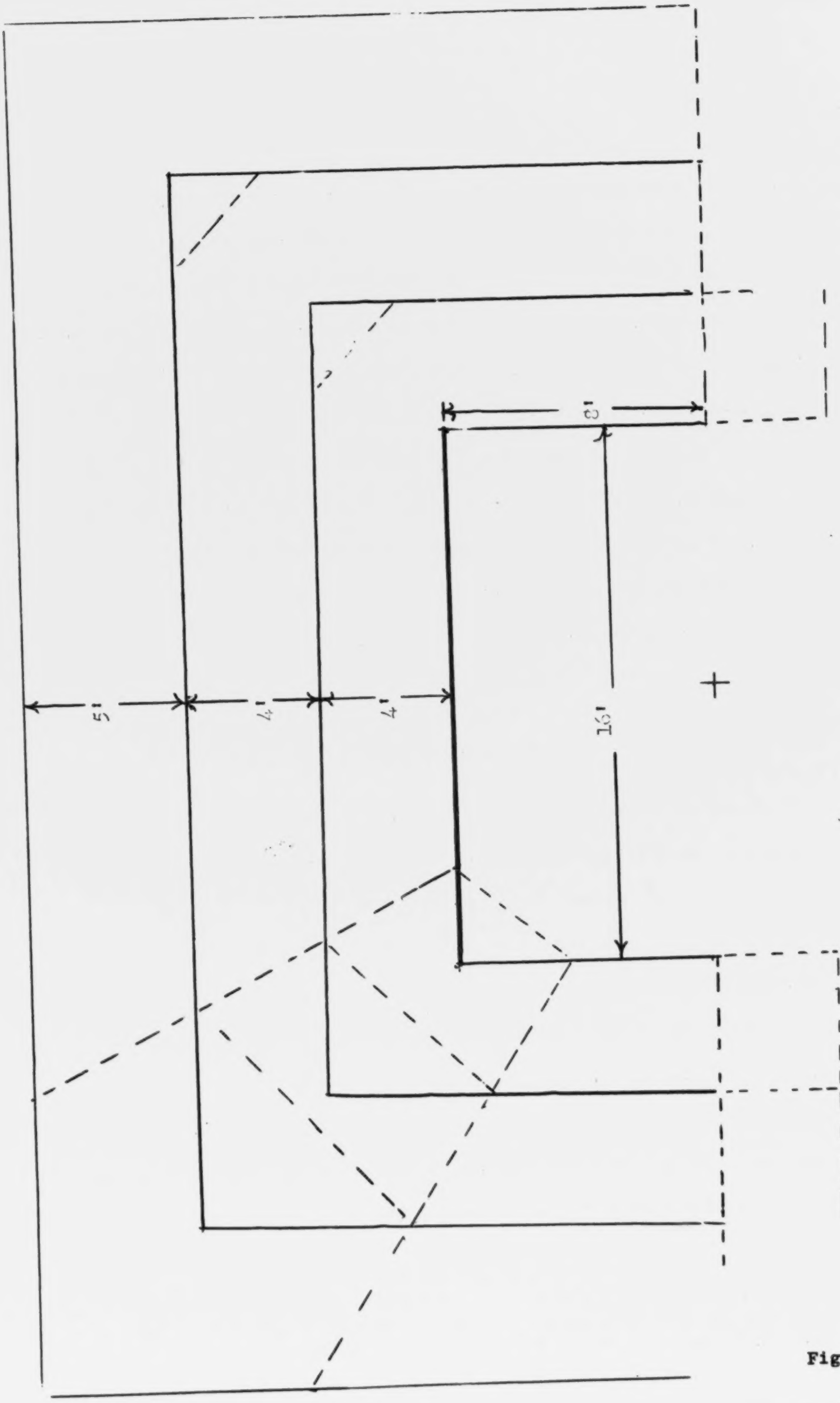


Figure 3

which will maintain the general contour and cost a great deal less.

The circular riser may be resolved to the squared three section effects as indicated in figure 3. This causes some interference between players at the corners. Additional sections as indicated by the dottted lines at "A" alleviate some of the problems. Ideally, seven to nine such segment sections would be preferable.[3]

The addition of auxiliary sections as indicated at B in figure 3 do make the risers more functional. Instead of the large section, a type of triangular block is placed on the basic section. These block sections may be somewhat larger than illustrated. This type of construction may be somewhat cheaper and it does permit a player to sit in the corner by placing his rack on the block section. (B)

Auxiliary Rooms

Practice rooms are ordinarily intended for the use of one to five students. Most of such practice rooms are around ten feet square or perhaps eight by ten.

It is quite unlikely that more storage space will be provided than will be needed. With racks or bins provided for various size instruments space may be conserved and better protection provided for stored instruments.

If one room is provided for storage a minimum of ten by twenty feet will in most cases be necessary. Storage of band uniforms may be provided for by a higher level within the storage room to conserve

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3. Ideas in regard to this type of construction may be obtained from a pamphlet published by Humes and Berg Manufacturing Company, Inc., 4801 Railroad Ave., East Chicago, Indiana, makers of portable risers.

space and keep un-used uniforms out of the way.

The music director may wish to keep music files in his office. He may also have recording equipment which he would prefer keeping in a place not accessable to students. In view of the above, the office may be expected to be some larger than the practice rooms.

Since auxiliary rooms involve inside walls it is possible to help provide better sound conditions without additional expense. Rooms which have been planned to be ten feet by ten feet may be built with walls which are nine, eleven, ten and nine and a half feet (or other variation) avoiding right angles when at all possible. This procedure will prevent re-inforcement of sound waves, and requires a great deal less sound conditioning. The large rehearsal room may be constructed in a like manner. When the auxiliary rooms are constructed as above paralled walls will be avoided in one dimension.

Sound Conditioning

A variety of accustical material is available and can often be installed in a new facility with little or no extra cost. Such material for the ceiling may be standard in all rooms since excessive noise in any room requires some control.

Panels of accustical material may be installed on the walls of the large rehearsal room as well as the practice rooms. It should be pointed out that a completely "dead" room is not desirable. All walls should not need to be covered, and, of course, any irregularities within the room tend to break up sound waves and avoid reinforcement. An alternation of convex and concave panels have been found to do an effective job.

Accustical engineers can compute rather closely what the needs are. Yet there are so many variables that care should be taken when arriving at any absolute conclusion. People and their clothing absorb sound waves too. So the number of students using the facilities need to be considered.

Another variable which the engineer will consider is both the texture and the hardness of the walls. Rough walls do not reflect like hard smooth walls.

Equipment

Reference to the music bulletin (State Department of Education, August, 1966, No. 3) should be made to determine instrumental needs. However, rehearsal rooms should have a "black board" and a bulletin board when facility is built.

Music Sorting Racks

Racks which can serve both as a means of distributing new music to the proper folder and a place where students may pick up their folder without confusion are highly desirable. Such racks are generally placed in the rehearsal room and would be constructed similiar to figure 4. Racks should be installed at the front of rehearsal room or on the side against a wall or partition. They would extend a minimum of sixteen feet. Longer racks will generally be preferred. When possible they should be close to the library and perhaps fifteen feet from the usual entrance.

This dual purpose type of rack has several advantages. Of considerable importance is the fact that students may obtain their folder with a minimum

SORTING RACKS

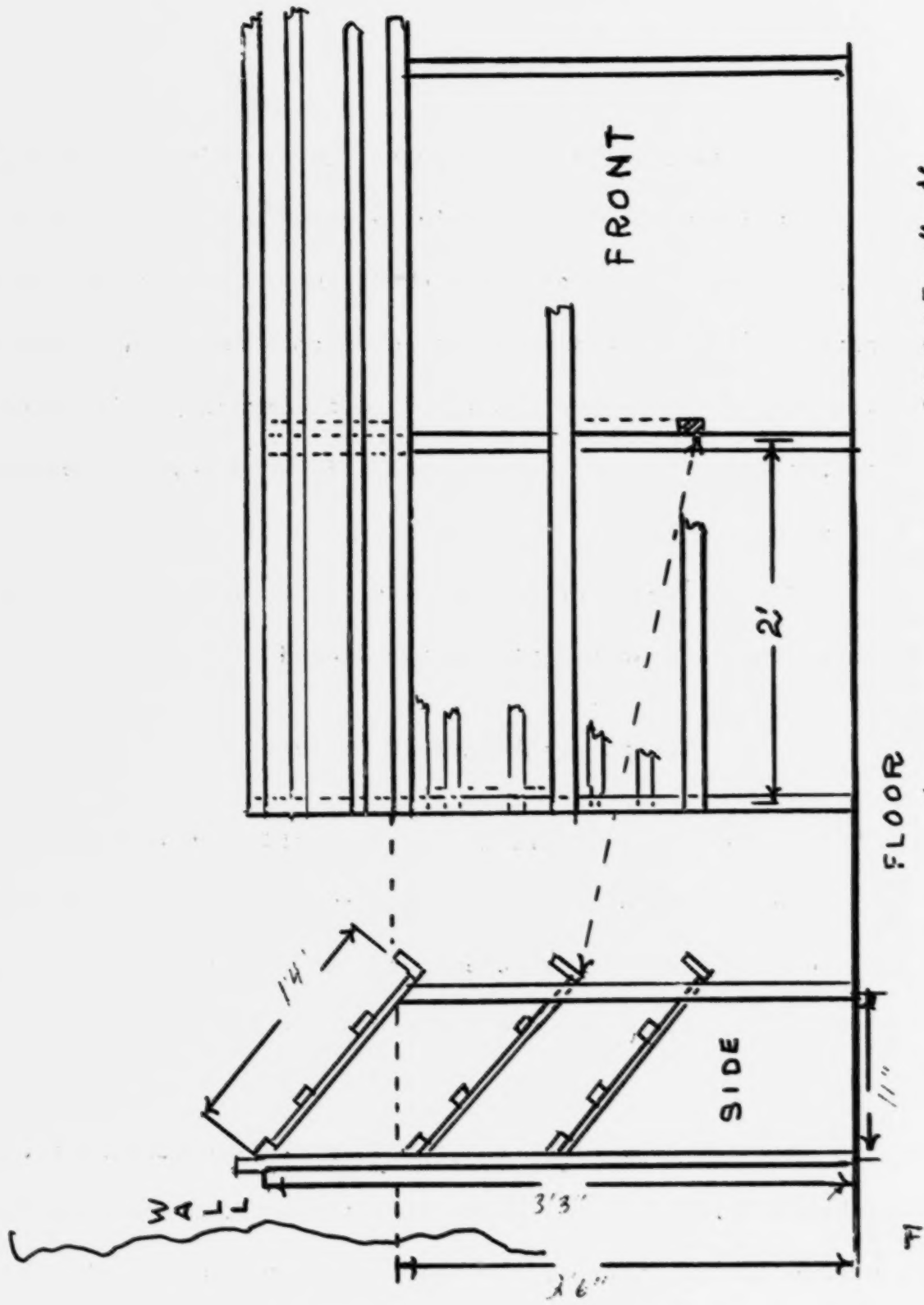

FIGURE 4

of interference with each other. This is not the case when folders are placed in the compact cabinet type.

Music Stands

Most facilities will require new or additional music racks of the semi-perminent type. Folding racks are too unstable and are short lived. There are many excellent racks for this purpose on the market. All of this type are adjustable as to angle and height. The rack can be taken apart for more compact packing when the organization is on tour or making long trips. However, they are generally moved in one piece.

Music stands, of course, are not a part of the facility plan, but never the less should not be overlooked.

Lighting-Electrical Outlets

It is extremely difficult to provide artificial lighting which is adequate for all sections of a music group without producing a somewhat blinding effect on the conductor. In most instances, it has been found best to provide over-head florescent lights. Back lighting cannot be too bright.

Several convenient electrical outlets should be provided in the rehearsal room as well as the auxiliary rooms and office. These are needed for a number of electrical devises used in the teaching of music, including tape recorders and record players.